



The Fabric of Community

Community groups are the fabric of a community. Community groups provide a place for individuals to build social connections.

Community groups identify and address the needs of the community. By working together on projects and initiatives, community groups encourage civic engagement and increase participation in the local decision-making process. In addition, being a part of a community group can provide opportunities for personal growth and development.



Izza Vybe is a music and comedy showcase curated by LaGhe Music Entertainment to uplift Black performers through music and laughter. Fabric Lab has had the privilege of holding space for Izza Vybe performers to be in community and refine their craft.

**CHUNK APIN
OAK**

A Brief History of Community Groups in North Omaha

Community elder and author Pat Allen often discusses the variety and vibrancy of community groups in North Omaha. There were dozens and dozens of community groups ranging from social groups like the Native Omahan Club to the DePorres Club, a civil rights advocacy group. Unfortunately, the state of the North Omaha community declined due to continued racial discrimination, the riots in the 1960s, and urban renewal projects such as Highway 75. The unraveling of the community fabric and community groups followed the physical destruction of homes and businesses.



Community elder and author Pat Allen speaking at
OPS Making Invisible Histories Visible

Community Groups Today

Despite the destruction of our physical spaces, there are various community groups in North Omaha today. We are grateful that Fabric Lab can provide a safe space for community groups like Well-Read Women of Omaha, Beyond the Stigma, Healing Roots African Diaspora Garden, Just Ride, IzzA Vybe, and Juneteenth JoyFest Committee to meet, work, create, and play.



Celeste Butler community leader and artist leading a group walk on the North Omaha Trail

**BUCK
EYE**



What's Goin On?


Spark's first ChangeMakers Academy is underway and is taking place at Fabric Lab. The academy educates, supports, and creates a pipeline for leaders who understand holistic community development to bring positive change to redlined communities. Participants will analyze principles and practices of community change and evolution. ChangeMaker's empowers community members to take action to bring forth positive change.



Community leader meeting at Fabric Lab
for Spark's ChangeMakers Academy

HACK
BERRY






On Saturday, February 11, 2023 students from OPS Making Invisible Histories Visible presented story maps on the changing landscape of North 24th St. Their story maps provided information about the built environment and honed in on the lived experiences of people living, working, and doing business along the North 24th St. corridor in the 1950s and 1960s

<https://www.ops.org/Page/6274>



A student from OPS's Making Invisible Histories Visible presenting their story map to community members at Fabric Lab.

**SUGAR
MAPLE**



Thriving Communities Program (TCP) aims to ensure that disadvantaged communities adversely or disproportionately affected by environmental, climate, and human health policy outcomes have the technical tools and organizational capacity to compete for federal aid and deliver quality infrastructure projects that enable their communities and neighborhoods to thrive. Our thriving communities team comprises MAPA, the City of Omaha, Spark, and community members. Together we submitted a letter of intent. We were then asked to submit a letter of commitment. If selected for this technical assistance grant, our focus will be on the impacts of Highway 75 on North Omaha and rebuilding the community it tore apart.

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/thriving-communities>
<https://heartland2050.org/infrastructure/>



Community members on a walk along the North Omaha Trail. The Pratt Street bridge pictured is a critical connector across Highway 75.






On Friday, March 3, 2023, Stephanie from Black Chick Farm, Healing Roots African Diaspora Garden, No More Empty Pots, and dozens of community members started over 400 seeds and made 170 seed bombs! The seeds we started will be planted at Healing Roots African Diaspora Garden. The seed bombs will be thrown along the trail later this spring.



Community members making seed bombs at the second annual Sowing Sovereignty Seed Start





About North Omaha Legacy Tours from the organizer: UNMC and Nebraska Medicine colleagues and students wrapped up Black History Month with a historical tour of North Omaha co-sponsored by Nebraska Medicine, African American Black Association (AABA) the UNMC Office of Inclusion and the UNMC Student Life Inclusion and Diversity Office (SLIDO). On Saturday, February 25th from 2-4, participants joined for a bus tour celebrating the rich history of North Omaha. Provided by the Institute for Urban Development, the tour was guided by author, Black history professor and founder of the Institute for Urban Development, Preston Love Jr.



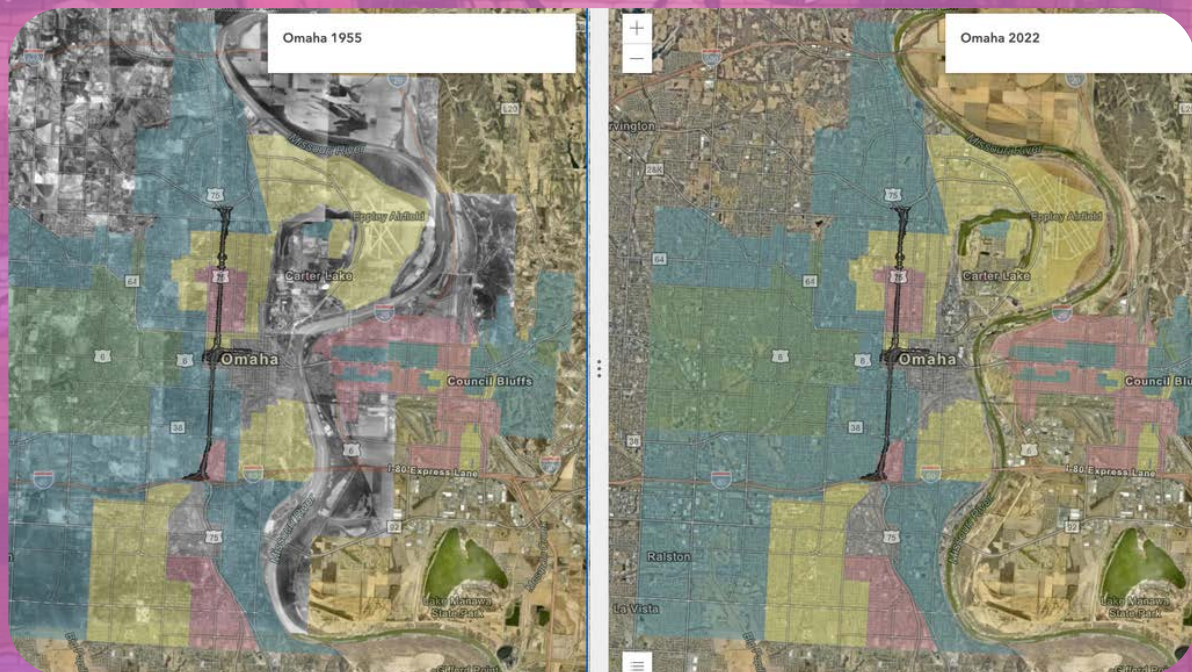
UNMC and Nebraska Medicine colleagues and students at the northern head of the North Omaha.



NORTHERN
CATALPA
TREE



This past fall semester, students enrolled in the civil engineering program on the UNL campus learned about the impacts of historic redlining on municipal civil engineering projects. They also learned about the impact of designing Highway 75 in Omaha that separated the historically Black community of North Omaha. In the second semester in the CIVE 102 class, the students are learning how to use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as a tool for Civil Engineering planning and design. They are doing a project, working with Fabric Lab. The students will take old maps and aerial images of the area before Highway 75 was built, georeference them, and then digitize them so that they can be used in GIS. This assignment serves a dual purpose, the students learn georeferencing and digitizing, which is a useful skill to have when working with the older data many civil engineering clients have. The students are also learning about the impact building Highway 75 had on the Black community in North Omaha. They will analyze how many buildings, how many families, and how many businesses were displaced by this decision to build the highway through this community. This work and the partnership with Fabric Lab will help our freshman Civil Engineering majors transform into more thoughtful future Civil Engineers.



UNL Students work in-progress on the restoration of land parcels that were removed for the development of Highway 75

<https://mapa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Compare/index.html?appid=e50b72de53144669892d94f764f24147>



Pull Up & Vibe is an open mic series hosted by performing artist and Fabric Lab partner Keiria Marsha. Her Pull Up & Vibe series is a platform for all people, artists, and performers to be heard. Pull Up & Vibe takes place every first Saturday. Each Pull Up & Vibe will highlight a selection of artists curated by Keiria Marsha.

CCVisions Presents

PULL UP AND VIBE

Open Mic Series 2023

Hosted by:
Keiria Marsha

April 1st
6 - 9 pm

Fabric Lab
2514 N 24 St,
Omaha NE, 68111

Featuring:
Savannah



The upcoming Pull Up & Vibe will feature 10 year old performing artists Savannah. Interested in performing? Sign-up here [Pull Up And Vibe Registration](#)



Introducing the FabricLab Partners



Alajia Mekizia is a multi-disciplinary artist and curator. She is a 2022 Populus Fund Grantee and was a 2020 Inside/Out Fellow at the Union for Contemporary Art. She is the curator of Juneteenth Joy Fest, a Black Arts & Cultural Festival in North Omaha and Sunday Soul, a five part performance series honoring women artists. Alajia has created many interactive community art projects throughout Omaha, as well as participated in



Clarice Dombeck was born and raised in North Omaha. She is an emerging urban planner, urban farmer, creative placemaker, and community organizer. Her background in Black Studies and Sociology profoundly informs her work in a way that centers the history, experiences, knowledge, and expertise of Black people.

**TREE
PLANTING**



Dawaune Lamont Hayes was born, raised, and loved on the land of the Umo'hoⁿ, Omaha Nation, The People Who Move Against the Current. They are a Regenerative Artist and Cultural Curator who works at the intersections of natural expression, historical reconciliation, and restorative futurism. They explore visual and performing arts, from burlesque dance to digital photography and collage to visualize their experience and those of their ancestors.



Keiria Marsha Lowe, known professionally as Keiria Marsha, is an American R&B singer, from Omaha Nebraska. Keiria grew up with a visionary mind. She grew up creating music, art, visuals, writing and recording. She started performing on stages as young as four years old. Keiria's passion for music, art, and social justice led to the creation of CCVisions (Collaborative Creative Visions). Through CCVisions, Keiria Marsha has created events such as Pull Up and Vibe Music Festival, Pull Up and Vibe Open Mic Series, Pull Up and Vibe Podcast, and Melanin City Classics.





Preston Love, Jr., brings the wisdom derived from his life experiences, his crusade and community activism for economic inclusion to his work.

Preston, who is the president of the men in his church, Antioch COGIC, gives all honor to Jesus Christ. Married to Martha, his spiritual leader and his best supporter.



Manuel Cook (Manne) is an urban planner, cultural entrepreneur, creative placemaker, and anti-displacement advocate from North Omaha whose work seeks to create vibrant places and more livable built environments.

Throughout his personal and professional career, Manne's spatial practice is anchored by partnerships with artists and grassroots organizations.



Opportunities to Support



Want to support the wonderful initiatives coming out of Fabric Lab? You could stop by Fabric Lab to purchase swag. You could sign up for volunteer opportunities here <https://forms.gle/pGW9PtnFrD7LHCp97>. Want to do more? You can directly support Fabric Lab partner initiatives with direct donations.

- **Alajia McKizia**
 - Venmo - @Alajia-Mckizia
 - PayPal - @JuneteenthJoy
- **Dawaune Hayes**
 - Venmo - @Dawaune-Hayes
 - CashApp - @DawauneHayes
- **Keiria Marsha**
 - CashApp - @KeiriaMarsha
- **Preston Love Jr.**
 - to donate to the BVM Black History Tour or Preston Love's other initiatives go to: 4urban.org and click on "DONATE"

